DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 314 896 EC 222 054

TITLE	The Least Restrictive Environment Task Force Report.
INSTITUTION	California State Dept. of Education, Sacramento. Div. of Special Education.
PUB DATE	Sep 88
NOTE	42p.; For other reports in this series, see EC 222 053-056.
AVAILABLE FROM	Resources in Special Education, 900 J St., Sacramento, CA 95814-2703 ($8.00).
PUB TYPE	Viewpoints (120) -- Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142)
EDRS PRICE	MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	Administration; Ancillary School Services; *Delivery Systems; *Disabilities; *Educational Policy; Elementary Secondary Education; Incidence; *Mainstreaming; Normalization (Handicapped); Parent School Relationship; *Regular and Special Education Relationship; *State Standards; Teacher Certification
IDENTIFIERS	*California

ABSTRACT

The report summarizes activities and findings of a California Task Force on Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) for students with disabilities. The Task Force solicited input from various professionals and agencies regarding implementation of the newly adopted (1986) state policy on LRE, current practices and programs which impact LRE policy, and ways the State Department of Education can increase the number and quality of LRE options. Introductory information reviews the Task Force mission and background. Seven general observations are then made, among which are that noticeable change has occurred throughout the state since adoption of the LRE policy statement and that understanding and implementation of integration vary considerably across the state. The section on methodology identifies the seven subcommittees which dealt with such issues as site administration, parent involvement, deaf and hard of hearing, and teacher credentialing. The longest section presents a summary of the 51 recommendations of the Task Force, divided into five major sections: (1) administration issues (including finance, facilities, and planning and training); (2) parent issues; (3) related services issues; (4) low incidence population issues; (5) and teacher credentialing issues. Also included is the text of the LRE Policy Statement and a listing of the Task Force membership. (DB)

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The Least Restrictive Environment Task Force Report

An Advisory Report to Patrick Campbell, Assistant Superintendent
California Department of Education
Special Education Division

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From
The Task Force on
The Least Restrictive Environment
September 1988

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EC 212154

California State-Department of Education
Policy Statement on Least Restrictive Environment

Approved by California State Board of Education, October 10, 1986

California's commitment to the provision of services to individuals with exceptional needs in the least restrictive environment is clearly stated in the legislative intent:

> "Individuals with exceptional needs are offered special assistance programs which promote maximum interaction with the general school population..." (E.C. Part 30, Chap. 1, Sect. 56005(g))

This commitment is further stressed in the mandate which requires that:

> "A pupil shall be referred for special educational instruction and services only after the resources of the regular education program have been considered and, where appropriate, utilized." (E.C. Part 30, Chap. 4, Art. 1, Sect. 56303)

Policies for implementing this intent statewide are based on the principle that individuals with exceptional needs should receive their education in chronologically age appropriate environments with nonhandicapped peers. This principle maintains that both nonhandicapped and handicapped children are most successfully educated in a shared environment where qualities of understanding, cooperation and mutual respect are nurtured.

It is also the intent of federal and state statutes and regulations that individuals with exceptional needs attend the same public school as nonhandicapped students in their neighborhood unless it is determined by the Individualized Education Program (IEP) Team to be inappropriate to their educational and social needs.

Therefore, placement in an educational environment other than a regular class should be considered only when the IEP team determines that the regular environment, services, and/or curriculum cannot be modified effectively to meet the needs of the students as specified in his/her IEP.

Both federal and state regulations mandate the provision of:

> "...a full continuum of program options to meet the educational and service needs of individuals with exceptional needs in the least restrictive environment." (E.C. Part 30, Chap. 1, Art. 2, Sect. 56031)

To ensure that a full continuum of program options are available, all education agencies should review their current delivery systems to determine that:

1. Program options in regular education environments are available at local neighborhood schools.
2. Special education programs, to the maximum extent appropriate to student needs, are housed on regular school campuses and dispersed throughout the district.
3. The physical location of the program facilitates continuing social interaction with nonhandicapped students.
4. Individuals with exceptional needs have equal access to all regular education activities, programs, and facilities on the regular school site and participate in those activities as appropriate to their needs.
5. Administrative policies and procedures encourage the close cooperation of all school personnel to facilitate opportunities for social interaction between individuals with exceptional needs and nonhandicapped individuals.
6. Administrative policies and procedures allow individuals with exceptional needs maximum access to appropriate general education academic programs and school personnel are given necessary support to ensure the student's success.
7. Long-range plans and commitments for physical housing on regular school campuses are made in order to avoid frequent and disruptive program relocations.
8. Through long-range commitments for physical housing on regular school campuses, individuals with exceptional needs are afforded opportunities to develop and maintain continuing relationships with nonhandicapped peers.

Consistent with the determination of an IEP team, students may be placed in residential schools or nonpublic schools and may be provided educational services in medical facilities. Administrators of those facilities and programs are encouraged to provide opportunities for participation with nonhandicapped students in both educational and social activities.

In all instances, the IEP team determines the extent to which an individual with exceptional needs participates in regular education with nonhandicapped students. The determination of appropriate program placement, related services needed, and curriculum options to be offered is made by the IEP team based upon the unique needs of the handicapped student rather than the label describing the handicapping condition or the availability of programs.

To summarize California's position on the least restrictive environment for individuals with exceptional needs receiving a public education, the State Department of Education heartily concurs with the Legislature in its declaration that:

> "Special education is an integral part of the total public education system and should provide maximum interaction between handicapped and nonhandicapped pupils..." (E.C. Part 30, Chap. 1, Sect. 56031)

The Least Restrictive Environment Task Force Report

An Advisory Report to Patrick Campbell, Assistant Superintendent
California Department of Education
Special Education Division

From
The Task Force on
the Least Restrictive Environment
September 1988

Other publications from the Least Restrictive Environment Task Force:

LRE Subcommittee Reports: Working Papers
- *General Administrative Issues*
- *Related Services Policy Issues*
- *Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program Issues*
- *Visually Handicapped Program Issues*
- *Parent and Family Issues*

(Available on loan from Resources in Special Education.)

Special Education Task Force Reports:

General Education / Special Education Interface
Larry P.
Least Restrictive Environment
Model for Program Quality in Special Education
(Available for purchase from Resources in Special Education.)

This publication was edited and prepared for photo-offset production by Resources in Special Education (RiSE) under the direction of the Program, Curriculum, and Training Unit, Special Education Division, California State Department of Education.

Copies of this publication are available from Resources in Special Education, 900 J Street, Sacramento, California 95814-2703.

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Least Restrictive Environment Task Force
Membership 1988-89

Listed below are the participants who served on the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) Task Force. Each of these members also served on at least one of the LRE Subcommittees. Some participants during 1987-88 did not participate during the 1988-89 school year and are not listed below.

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Task Force Mission

This report is intended to serve as a summary of the activities and findings of the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) Task Force. The Task Force was assembled by Assistant Superintendent of Public Instruction for Special Education, Patrick Campbell, who provided direction and support for the Task Force over a two-year period (1986-1988). Other than providing the Task Force with resources, a list of participants and a general direction and focus, Mr. Campbell did not interfere with the operation of the Task Force in any way. The Task Force was developed in order to function as an advisory to the State Department of Education (SDE). It served as one means of soliciting input from various professionals and agencies across the State of California regarding how to more fully implement the newly adopted state policy on LRE, how to respond to mounting concern regarding current practices and programs which impact least restrictive environment policy, and how to advise the SDE on innovative ways to promote the integration of students into regular education environments and programs.

The Task Force represented a competent and diverse group with regard to the opinions, affiliations and experiences of the members. Additional members who contributed to the subcommittees further expanded the expertise and diversity of the overall group. Given this membership diversity, it must be acknowledged that some issues pertaining to integrated and segregated placement options would not, and could not, be resolved in this forum. As a result, the Task Force Chairs worked with the Assistant Superintendent and the Task Force members in order to limit and focus the mission of the Task Force in such a way as to constructively and productively utilize its membership. To that end, during Task Force Year 1, the following mission statement was adopted:

"The LRE Task Force will advise the State Department of Education of ways to increase the number and quality of LRE options closest to both the regular classroom and the student's normal attendance area school."

The mission was accepted by members without passing, or in any way implying, judgements as to the appropriateness or inappropriateness of less integrated options. Such options, and ensuing debates, were simply outside the limited scope of the task force's accepted charge. During Year 2 of the Task Force, the Assistant Superintendent further directed narrowing of the Task Force mission by concentrating attention toward students in severely handicapped and low incidence program areas.

Although this document has been prepared specifically as an advisory to Assistant Superintendent Campbell, it is important for any other reader to realize what were and were not the purposes of the Task Force. Many members of the Task Force felt that since the focus was enhancing integrated options, and not dealing with other program options, the field might be provided with a distorted definition of LRE. Perhaps, in retrospect, to reduce confusion this Task Force might have been more properly named the "School Integration" vs. the "LRE" Task Force. In any event, discrepancies between current practice and the intent of the LRE policy do exist. A great number of these discrepancies relate to the lack of appropriate integration options. Some questions have been raised related to the extent to which a full continuum of service options has been developed within the regular education environment and program before other placement options are considered. That became the rationale for focusing on enhancing integrated options.

The Task Force is pleased to report that an increasing number of proactive activities concerning LRE implementation are occurring in various parts of the state. Many new and exciting ways to promote quality integrated placements are evolving and being explored. It is hoped that this report will enhance all such efforts.

In order for readers of this report to understand what areas of LRE policy were not within the scope of this Task Force's agenda, the following points are offered:

- The purpose of the LRE Task Force was not to write LRE policy; the State Department of Education policy on LRE was approved by the California Board of Education on October 10, 1986.

- The purpose of the LRE Task Force was not to critique the adopted policy or any of the state or federal mandates from which it was derived. Public hearings concerning the policy and special education legislation have been held. Furthermore, future forums to debate the intent, commitment and biases of these laws and associated policies may be requested, but were not within the responsibilities assigned this Task Force.

- The LRE Task Force was not responsible for defining Least Restrictive Environment, reacknowledging the provision for a full continuum of program options or reaffirming the responsibilities of the IEP team in making placement decisions. Criteria for determining the least restrictive placement is delineated in law and policy and these laws and policies contain all the necessary elements to define LRE. These laws and policies also clearly provide a bias toward considering the most integrated options first along a continuum of options. Therefore, again it is noted that the Task Force minimized debates regarding the virtues of integrated versus segregated options.

- The Task Force was not responsible for dealing with the full range of other critical issues which enhance and limit the delivery of quality educational services. While many of these other critical issues need to be specifically explored and studied, they were not the focus of the LRE Task Force agenda.

- The two LRE Task Force Chairs acknowledge the tremendous amount of time and effort each Task Force member and subcommittee member devoted to this task. It should be understood by any reader of this report that although no recommendation has been made without discussion and comment, there are several recommendations which individual Task Force members or their affiliated agencies would not endorse.

Background

California has a long history of providing special education services, including services to students manifesting severe and/or low incidence disabilities. Many programs, facilities and administrative policies, procedures and structures have been designed to serve these students. During the 1950's and 60's, when many of these systems were first developed, they appeared to be the most progressive means of service delivery. In retrospect, these initiatives established a large number of segregated facilities and other separate service delivery models. Changing a long-tenured system perceived as successful is extremely difficult, especially when changes focus on new criteria for determining placements and a growing commitment to facilitate the integration of people with disabilities into all aspects of community life.

On October 10, 1986, the California Board of Education approved the State Department of Education's policy statement on Least Restrictive Environment. The policy highlights California's commitment to: 1) the developing of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for each student identified as having exceptional educational needs; 2) ensuring that a full continuum of program options are available for placement consideration; 3) having the IEP team assume the responsibility for placement decisions; and 4) having the IEP team explore all possible modifications of the regular environment, services and/or curriculum before considering any continuum of more segregated program options. The policy acknowledges that both state and federal mandates affirm this bias toward the most integrated option. In sum, the policy presents a strong commitment on behalf of the State of California to promote maximum integration of students with exceptional needs into the regular education environment and maximum interaction between students with exceptional needs and their nonhandicapped chronological-age peers. The policy contains a listing of eight criteria that all education agencies should use to review the appropriateness of

their current delivery systems.

The U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services (OSERS) distributed its final monitoring report covering the 1985 review of the California Department of Education. The report was extremely critical of California's compliance with basic LRE requirements. The report raised serious questions regarding current LRE practices and the extent to which choice of placement for students has been based on the categorization of handicapping conditions and not on individual needs. As a result, it found that some students have been removed from the regular school environment and program without appropriate justification and effort to alter and modify those regular environments. In sum, the report concluded from the sample that students were prevented from receiving an education in a continuum of alternative placements since integrated alternatives had not been satisfactorily explored. The monitoring report contained a series of required corrective actions.

Assistant Superintendent Campbell formed this Task Force prior to publication of the monitoring report. The Task Force construes this action as an indication of the SDE commitment to do more than just react to criticism and current shortcomings. Rather, the SDE is ready to pursue new ways to provide leadership and support for initiatives which will result in more students being successfully integrated into their schools and communities.

Although the Task Force concludes that a great deal of energy is being directed toward improving services in this area, much work remains. The SDE must be prepared to not only help local programs make needed changes today, but also to create systems which can respond to new models, methods, initiatives and regulations which are so characteristic of the rapidly changing general and special education system.

General Observations

This Task Force report and each of the subcommittee reports contain very specific recommendations and discussions. In addition to these specific recommendations and discussions, the following statements are intended to provide some general observations growing out of the activities of the Task Force.

1. Since the State Board of Education adopted an LRE policy statement, noticeable change has been occurring throughout the state. There is a recognizable movement toward the integration of students with severe handicaps onto general education campuses and away from separate facilities designed only for students with handicaps. This movement appears to be accelerating as more experience is gained in successful practices and as that experience is shared with others. The SDE has a leadership role to play if this willingness to move forward and try innovative approaches is to continue and expand.

2. Sophistication, experience and definition of integration varies considerably from agency to agency, professional to professional, and parent to parent. Locations of supposedly "integrated" programs range from settings in buildings, wings and rooms adjacent to the regular environment, to programs in which students are systematically and individually integrated into classroom, non-classroom and extracurricular activities. Planning for these programs range from those which deal with integration from a crisis management and/or apologetic framework to programs which have invested a great deal of time in curriculum, training and building accommodations in order to foster critical attitudes and skills among administrators, teachers, parents and students. The size of a program on an "integrated" campus ranges from large numbers of students inconsistent with normal population proportions and distribution, to programs which provide a small neighborhood school focus with adherence to natural proportions. Unfortunately, such indicators and defini-tions of quality integration were not addressed by this LRE Task Force. Nevertheless, the SDE should be prepared to support new models and methods for offering students a quality integrated program.

3. It appears that many Local Education Agencies (LEAs) have implemented LRE policy and provided integration opportunities despite the fact that funding models have not been developed which at least recognize, and more importantly promote and support, these efforts. Areas such as facility acquisition, transportation, training and staff availability must all be addressed via alterations in the funding model.

4. Providing integration opportunities for very young children must become a major priority. Many of the barriers the task force identified would be drastically reduced if there were system-wide integration efforts on behalf of very young children. The Task Force did not devote adequate time to the tremendous challenges and opportunities for LRE at the preschool level and, therefore, recommends that this area deserves special attention by the SDE.

5. Widespread disagreement remains regarding the integration of students with the most severely disabling conditions. This is particularly true of students who manifest aggressive behaviors or who have significant health care needs. Issues include a need for better role definitions, risk management, emergency and routine procedures, new groupings and curricula, and the delivery of a wide range of related services. Certainly some programs across the state and country have effectively integrated students who manifest the most severe disabilities. The LRE Task Force did not devote adequate time to addressing innovations and needs in this area. It is recommended that this area receive special attention by the SDE.

6. Each subcommittee report in particular, and the LRE Task Force in general, recognized the need for professionals and consumers at every level and in every discipline to be adequately trained to assume critical roles in promoting LRE. The availability of trained and qualified people to assume all of these critical roles provides a major agenda for preservice and inservice agencies. The LRE Task Force did not compile a listing of general and specific competencies required by various persons in order to promote quality programs in integrated settings. Many of the recommendations will provide a context for the SDE to generate such competency listings and then develop and support appropriate models for training.

7. LEAs are moving to further implement the LRE policy by insuring the availability of quality integrated options. As a result, many issues have and will surface which require further study. The SDE must be prepared to mobilize its monitoring, research, training and consultative services toward helping LEAs resolve such issues.

Methodology

During the first year of Task Force operation, systems which impact upon the delivery of educational services were examined in order to identify factors which facilitate or inhibit LRE. By the end of Year 1, the Task Force had developed and begun studying a long listing of barriers. These barriers became the basis for organizing the Task Force activities during the second year. Each of these barriers was organized by category, descriptions were rewritten for clarity and then compared and compiled with listings of integration barriers which had been identified by other groups and projects. It was felt that if these barriers were adequately identified and studied, the Task Force would be able to suggest remedies to attenuate them.

During Year 2 the Task Force was divided into five subcommittees, based on ways in which the barrier statements could be logically grouped for further study. Two additional subcommittees were formed to address concerns from the field pertaining to students who were either in deaf and hard of hearing or visually handicapped programs. As a result, a total of seven subcommittees were organized and supported during Year 2. Each subcommittee chair was encouraged to solicit additional members from the field to serve on his/her subcommittee, and to devise a methodology of operation which would provide a valid means for soliciting and/or reviewing the subcommittees' recommendations with the largest possible audience. The seven subcommittees which operated during Year 2 of the LRE Task Force included the following:

1. Issues pertaining to general administration and programs
2. Issues pertaining to site administration
3. Issues pertaining to the involvement of parents and families
4. Issues pertaining to the delivery of related services
5. Issues pertaining to teacher credentialing
6. Issues pertaining to deaf and hard of hearing programs
7. Issues pertaining to visually handicapped programs

Each subcommittee provided a report to the LRE Task Force which delineated: 1) its full membership; 2) its methodology of operation; 3) an introductory statement specifying background, intent and areas of major concern; 4) specific recommendations for SDE along with either background statements or rationale for each recommendation; 5) summaries of data collected and examples of forms used; and 6) other miscellaneous material. Specific problems regarding the completion of reports were encountered by the site administration and the teacher credentialing subcommittees. Therefore, this report contains only general summaries of their recommendations.

Each subcommittee varied in the size of membership, both in terms of the number of LRE Task Force members as well as the additional members that were solicited to participate. The methodology of each subcommittee differed. Various surveys, questionnaires, personal contacts and phone interviews were used and conducted. Sample sizes ranged from small to large and from randomly to specifically solicited. All subcommittee members extended themselves beyond their ongoing commitments and jobs to support this task force. Each subcommittee member would have felt more comfortable if more time could have been devoted to enlarging sample sizes, which would have increased field input and refined subcommittee draft reports. However, under the circumstances, each subcommittee report, and the summaries contained in this Task Force report, do provide SDE with a very broad-based advisory full of specific recommendations which warrant direct attention, if not implementation.

The document before you contains an abridged report submitted by the entire LRE Task Force. The Task Force also submitted to SDE a package of appendices to this report entitled *LRE Subcommittee Reports: Working Papers.* The appendices containing these drafts have sections which range from those that are well edited and very complete to reports and sections which are very rough.

LRE Subcommittee Reports: Working Papers contain the following appendices:

Appendix A : LRE Subcommittee Report Dealing with General Administrative Issues

Appendix B : LRE Subcommittee Report Dealing with Related Services Delivery Issues

Appendix C: LRE Subcommittee Report Dealing with Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program Issues

Appendix D: LRE Subcommittee Report Dealing with Visually Handicapped Program Issues

Appendix E: LRE Subcommittee Report Dealing with Parent and Family Issues

Although the LRE Task Force provided input to each subcommittee, the Task Force does not necessarily support all the recommendations contained in any of the unedited reports. Some of the recommendations were subjected to considerable debate and concern; however, the Task Force did not assume the authority to change any of the subcommittee recommendations. Further, it is noted and emphasized that the recommendations contained in the body of this full task force report were chosen, rewritten and/or organized to delineate ways that SDE could promote integration efforts. In no way should it be construed that this selection and editing process passes judgement on any subcommittee finding or recommendation. Finally, the full Task Force report is an attempt to present the full range of Task Force and committee activities and findings in as succinct and readable a fashion as possible. As a result, much information and detail which is provided in the subcommittee reports has been lost in the process of compiling this report. That is why SDE, and the field in general, are encouraged to read each of the subcommittee reports in detail.

Further comments regarding the function of the two subcommittees dealing with low incidence areas are warranted here. Some of the recommendations con-

tained in the other five subcommittee reports are appropriate for improving the quality of integration and education for all students, including those who manifest specific and various types of disabilities. On the other hand, some recommendations provided in the five subcommittee reports are specific to improving the quality of integration and education for students who manifest severe handicaps. As a result of the latter category, it was recognized that recommendations appropriate to improving the integration of students in deaf and hard of hearing programs, or visually handicapped programs, may either be different or missing from these other subcommittee reports. Therefore, the two subcommittees dealing with these low incidence areas attempted to address specific recommendations which either supplement or replace the recommendations of the other subcommittees. These subcommittees also provided a forum to solicit opinions from additional members who represent agencies and organizations that focus their attention and concern to these specific populations. As a result, these reports contain introductions, statements of concern, discussion of the nature of each integration barrier and the recommended actions that are much more pointed.

Consolidated Listing of Recommendations and Related Background Statements

This section contains a consolidated summary of the findings reported by each subcommittee. A total of fifty-one recommendations are provided and discussed in this section. This section is divided into five major sections which, for the most part, collapse the findings of the seven subcommittees into:

A. Administration Issues
   - Finance
   - Facilities
   - Planning and Training

B. Parent Issues

C. Related Services Issues

D. Low Incidence Population Issues

E. Teacher Credentialing Issues

A. Administrative Issues

Consolidated Background Statement: Overview

There were two subcommittee reports dealing with administrative, policy, fiscal, transportation and site administration issues. These groups, using various interview techniques, reported some common field perceptions of the barriers and needs related to further implementation of the LRE policy. The identified needs fell into three areas; finance needs, facility needs and training/planning/evaluation needs. Special attention was directed to recommendations related to needs associated with finances.

Consolidated Background and Recommendations: Finance

Many barriers to LRE have costs associated with their removal. Not only is LRE individual to each student, but the costs associated with LRE are often individual to each district. Many districts are moving ahead with plans for further integration of students with severe handicaps in spite of costs or because the local situation allows progress without exceptional costs. However, it is neither fair, nor reasonable, for the SDE to continue promoting LRE policies without also developing a funding model which recognizes and supports LRE initiatives.

The SDE Fiscal Task Force has recently completed a major report which proposes a number of important changes to the special education funding model. While the work of that Task Force has met many major needs, it does little to specifically recognize or promote program reform or change. One major program area that must be recognized and supported is LRE policy implementation. If, as is generally the case, the funding model drives the program model, then the funding system must provide both incentives and reasonable fiscal support for LEAs which attempt to increase the delivery of quality services in integrated settings.

Since most funding models are delicately structured and vulnerable to exploitation, changes to the finance system must be carefully designed in order to address the problems associated with lack of hard data, equity, wide variations in cost and manipulation potential. The reports submitted to the LRE Task Force suggested meeting a wide range of finance needs. Three key recommendations could begin a series of responsible SDE actions in this area.

Recommendations

1. **It is recommended that the SDE request the Fiscal Task Force to convene an ad hoc subcommittee charged with developing modifications to the proposed special education funding model which encourages movement of pupils with severe handicaps to less restrictive settings. This small ad**

hoc group could function as a special arm of the SDE LRE Task Force, and could examine all the recommendations in this report as to implications for the funding model.

2. **It is recommended that the SDE continue to study and disseminate information about the various transportation cost elements involved in implementing LRE policies, especially as they relate to the movement of students to integrated campuses.**

3. **It is recommended that the SDE immediately disseminate information on the financial advantages of utilizing Assembly Bill 4074 (California Education Code 56828/29) to transfer students with severe handicaps to their home districts from provider districts and/or county programs.**

The recommendation is made for assignment of responsibility to the Fiscal Task Force for developing plans for implementing finance recommendations because that group has spent the past two years collecting data and studying the system. Since LRE has a heavy, often misunderstood program dimension, the ad hoc group should be supplemented by people who have implemented progressive LRE policies and understand new programs and transportation cost demands.

Consolidated Background and Overview: Facilities

The second major area of concern by administrators in the field deals with facilities. Procedures for allocation of state school building funds do not now encourage movement of students from isolated to integrated sites, nor do they recognize the problems associated with owning sites vacated by such moves. Counties report numerous problems in leasing classroom space from districts on regular school sites. Further, long range facilities planning is impeded in some areas by inadequate and confusing data concerning the rapidly changing status of residential programs for students with severe handicaps.

To correct these problems, the reports present four recommendations which

utilize the same solution process:

4. **It is recommended that the SDE direct their representatives on the Special Education Facilities Committee to explore development of proposals for the following changes in policies and procedures:**

   a. **Altering the State School Building priority point system to allow a higher priority for districts building regular school facilities to accommodate students being moved from isolated sites;**

   b. **Altering the State School Building square footage computation procedures to exclude sites vacated for integration purposes;**

   c. **Providing incentives to districts which offer stable, long-term leasing opportunities in regular sites to county-operated programs; and**

   d. **Establishing regional planning procedures and data collection related to facility needs for students, related service staff and equipment.**

The third element of administrative concern involves efforts to strengthen the monitor and review process. Both OSERS and the Office of Civil Rights reviews have cited the need to strengthen California's placement process especially as it relates to individual placement decision making. They emphasize that placements must be made on an individual basis from a LRE standpoint, rather than placement procedures which result in placing pupils with similar severe disabilities in a traditionally used setting. Thus examination of individual cases is the only appropriate way to monitor the process and, hopefully, encourage LEAs to provide more placement options on regular school campuses.
The reports offer the following recommendation:

5. **It is recommended that the Coordinated Compliance Review (CCR) process be strengthened in terms of LRE to specifically include examination of three randomly selected pupil IEPs to determine if policy requirements related to LRE had been met prior to placement.**

Consolidated Background and Recommendations: Planning and Training

The final set of administrative recommendations involves planning and training. These recommendations are based on two findings. First, interviews with various administrators reveal a perception that there exists a wide range of attitudes and beliefs among the SDE staff regarding movement of students with severe handicaps to more integrated settings. The greatest diversity of opinion appears to involve judgements about whether students who manifest the more severe disabilities can benefit from placement on regular school campuses. Training sessions based on a common pool of experience and research would hopefully narrow this range of opinion and enable field consultants to offer similar advice on LRE problems.

Second, interviews with principals indicate that administrators are not reluctant to promote integration in and onto their campuses if: a) the resources are adequate; b) they have the appropriate centralized support and guidance; and c) they can learn "how to" tactics from others who have successfully integrated students with severe handicaps. No mechanism currently exists for systematically training site administrators. Regular education administrators reported to the subcommittees that they would be interested in sponsoring, supporting and being actively involved in providing and participating in such training.

To remove these barriers, the reports make the following recommendations:

6. **The SDE should develop, or facilitate the development of, a site administrator's handbook on Integrating Students with Handicaps within a Comprehensive School Campus. The handbook should provide practical "how to" suggestions and guidance for the school administrators in such areas as preparing the staff and community for the integration of students with severe handicaps, recruiting and selecting qualified teachers, involving all students in the school instructional program and extra- curricular activities, and assimilating parents of students with severe handicaps into the school community.**

   The handbook should include copies of the Interview Summary

Sheets contained in the subcommittee report. Collectively, the single page interview summaries constitute a resource library which can assist special education local plan area (SELPAs), districts and site administrators dealing with integration problems. The school administrators interviewed have consented to serve as "instant consultants" to anyone calling for assistance. The integration barriers they have successfully overcome are also listed. The completed interviews are a part of Appendix A.

7. It is recommended that the SDE arrange to conduct intensive LRE training with all SDE field consultants and other appropriate staff. The Providing Education for Everyone in Regular Schools (PEERS) Project could be used to help support this recommendation.

8. It is recommended that the SDE use its internal and external resources, such as the staff of the PEERS projects, to develop training modules appropriate to the role of the school site administrator in promoting integration onto and within the regular school environment and program. Channels normally used to provide inservice training to general education administrators such as the professional development program of the Association of California School Administrators and the administrator training and evaluation program should be encouraged to provide training to existing site administrators. Of special urgency are training modules covering medical emergencies and liability factors.

9. It is recommended that the SDE should establish a recognition program that honors general education administrators who successfully implement LRE and transition of students with severe handicaps from isolated sites to comprehensive neighborhood schools.

10. It is recommended that the SDE, in collaboration with California Teacher Credentialing (CTC), identify those competencies necessary to ensure successful implementation of LRE. University level administrator training programs should be expected to develop the LRE competencies of administrator candidates and certify them as qualified prior to the issuance of a clear Administrative Services Credential.

11. It is recommended that SDE field consultants be assigned as members of the LRE Support Teams being developed for a variety of SELPAs by the PEERS Project.

12. It is recommended that the SDE develop more precise criteria regarding the LRE section of each SELPA plan. These criteria should require more specific objectives as well as specific data collection, progress monitoring procedures, and scheduled training.

B. Parent Issues

Consolidated Overview

The Task Force concludes that parent education and involvement are seen as critical components in further implementation of LRE policy. This is especially true provided the interest in increasing and enhancing the integration of students into the general education environments and program. The report to the Task Force concluded that:

a. Some parents are unaware of the state's policy on LRE, as well as Public Law 94-142 and their parental rights. Such knowledge is critical to informed participation in the IEP process and to making an informed choice regarding type of placement.

b. Some parents are unaware of the existence of integrated options for their children with severe handicaps. Others are aware of the options but have little or no information (or have misinformation) regarding the benefits of integration. Considerable variation exists in the extent to which districts and SELPAs provide parents with information on integrated options. The need is great for a systematic means of disseminating accurate information about integration to all parents, in a format which is easily understood.

c. Some school staff members have excellent communication skills with parents, yet have little experience in the integration process and how to involve and support parents. Staff may be very committed to integration and not understand parental resistance or concern. Such resistance and/or concern may arise due to lack of information on the part of the parents, as well as emotions being raised as they deal with another aspect of their children's disability (i.e., the effects of consideration of integrated options on the parents' grieving/coping processes). Staff need information on how to support parents in the integration process.

d. Some districts or SELPAs do not systematically involve parents in integration planning efforts. This can lead to a lack of understanding of and trust in the integration process. Districts and SELPAs may lack information on the utility of involving parents in all stages of the planning process. The report stressed the need for parents committed to enhancing integration efforts to be supported and utilized by districts rather than to be thrust into adversarial roles. Further, the subcommittee stressed the need to provide integration opportunities at the preschool level.

e. Some parents of nondisabled children, as well as organizations such as the PTA, may be unaware of the reasons and benefits of integration and its value and impact for both nondisabled and disabled children. Yet such parents and organizations can provide powerful support to the integration process, particularly to parents of children with disabilities. Systematic dissemination of information about integration to these individuals and groups is critical. This information should describe the purposes of integration, as well as its potential impact on both disabled and nondisabled children. Summaries of such information are widely available in the special education literature.

Consolidated Recommendations

The SDE should take a leadership role in encouraging the field to inform parents regarding integration and their rights.

13. **The SDE should develop a brochure on integration of students with severe handicaps for parents. It should describe the rationale for integration, resources for visiting model integrated programs, California's LRE policy, and parental rights in terms of placement options, as well as a variety of service delivery options. Dissemination of the brochure to all parents should be mandatory. The brochure could be disseminated at each IEP meeting, with a separate signoff from the IEP, indicating receipt of the information. Means of dissemination prior to and separate from the IEP should also be investigated in order to maximize the impact of the brochure. It should also be disseminated to Community Advisory Committees (CACs), Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs), and other parent and advocacy groups. It should be translated into all needed target languages. The State LRE policy as well as information on PL 94-142 and parent rights should also be disseminated.**

14. **The SDE should develop a videotape of a panel of parents with experience with integration. These parents should represent children and youth from the full spectrum of severe handicaps (i.e., including students who have multiple and profound handicaps, as well as those with challenging behaviors). They should also represent varying ethnicities and should include mothers, fathers, and care providers. Integration should be presented in a positive light, but the existence of problems should also be validated, along with strategies which were used to solve those problems.**

15. **The SDE should develop a system of parent facilitators knowledgeable in the area of integration of students with severe handicaps. Such parents would provide information and support to individual parents, as well as to parent meetings and groups. They could also assist school district staff**

in developing plans to provide information and support to parents.

16. The SDE should develop a systematic mechanism for facilitating parents visiting model integrated programs. Such a mechanism would require greater coordination among existing model programs (e.g., PEERS, Training and Resources for Community and Curriculum Integration, California Deaf-Blind Services, and The Association for the Severely Handicapped-Technical Assistance). Information about how to access the system could be included in the brochure described above. Financial assistance to parents remote from any model integrated programs should be provided.

17. The SDE should develop a list of resources for parent education in the area of integration. This list should be developed and disseminated to each district, SELPA, County Office of Education, CAC, and PTA. The resources should be made available through Resources in Special Education (RiSE) and the regional offices of PEERS. The list could be disseminated via SpecialNet, *The Special Edge*, and by a direct mailing to organizations without access to SpecialNet. State consultants should also have the list available for dissemination to the districts and SELPAs they serve.

18. The SDE should require that the Local Plan describe how parent education regarding LRE and integration will be completed. State consultants should monitor such plans and provide assistance with their development and implementation.

19. The SDE should develop and disseminate guidelines for districts and SELPAs on how to involve parents in the integration planning process and require responses to these guidelines in the local plans. Key elements to be included should be: a) development of an Integration Support Team which includes representation of parents (general and special education) and other key constituencies, and b) development of a school site team, including both general and special education parents and staff, which develops plans specific to the local school.

20. The SDE should disseminate the resources described above for special education parents (videotape, resource list, and brochure) to PTAs at state and local levels. The SDE should require local plans to include activities to involve PTA representatives in the integration planning process.

21. The SDE should provide guidelines for supporting parents in the integration process, along with the resource list for parent education recommended above. These guidelines should include information on

the implications of integration for parental grieving and coping processes.

22. **It is recommended that PEERS be used to develop a prototype integration brochure. PEERS, in conjunction with RiSE and/or the television specialist of PCTU, could develop the videotape. PEERS and California Research Institute (CRI) could develop the resource list of parent education materials.**

C. Related Services Issues

Consolidated Background Statement

A free and appropriate public education, under PL 94-142, EHA-B, includes access to related services identified on the IEP as necessary for the student to benefit from special education. Related services in California are indicated on the IEP as Designated Instruction and Services (DIS) and include speech therapy, physical therapy, mental health services, parent education and other services identified in special education regulations. In California, the provision of certain DIS is complicated by the fact that public agencies other than education are the primary providers with responsibility for determining eligibility and service delivery under different governing codes. The Related Services Subcommittee report identified major barriers or issues which impact the delivery of related services to students who have severe disabilities. Barriers which limit attempts to further integrate these students received specific attention. Many of these other agencies organized and developed service delivery models prior to the SDE's LRE policy and initiative.

A full range of service delivery options has not been adequately developed which limits where and how related services are provided. The SDE has authorization to monitor the provision of related services provided by other agencies but has no authority to require those agencies to take corrective action if those agencies fail to comply with PL 94-142 requirements. California Children's Services,

for example, does not necessarily see the maintenance of therapy and skill gains as its responsibility. Further, there is a perception that decisions on where and how services are delivered are frequently subject to organizational guidelines and the staffing and funding procedures of related service agencies, rather than individual child needs. There are serious concerns about how limited resources can be stretched to develop a full range of necessary related services. There is often a lack of sufficient space at schools to house "mini Medical Therapy Units," adaptive physical education, County Department of Mental Health (DMH) and other related service staff.

Beliefs existing among some educators, consumers, and other agency personnel are that special centers can provide more and better services than if students are on decentralized sites, and that only specialized personnel can meet the needs of students with disabilities. These beliefs also limit where and how related services are provided by promoting strict categorical, separate and pull-out models. Personnel who work in the various related service areas, through prior training and experience, may become specialized in working with specific student populations and in specific settings. These specializations can mitigate against the provision of services to students with a wide range of disabilities in the least restrictive settings. Consultative related service models are being developed; however, the availability of such services varies considerably across the state. Factors associated with delivering services in highly vs. sparsely populated areas also have been under consideration. Providers do not agree on what components ensure an effective related service delivery model. The database in this area is grossly underdeveloped.

The subcommittee collapsed the barriers studied into two major areas: 1) administration and organizational issues and concerns, and 2) training issues and needs. Specific recommendations were developed to address issues within each of

the topical areas. These recommendations include:

a. Legislative action required to remedy programmatic or fiscal barriers

b. Cooperative action between education and other agencies to achieve agreements for facilitating delivery of appropriate services and LRE options

c. Identification of successful models and development of materials for providing technical assistance and training to the field

d. Development and dissemination of SDE policies, program advisories and/or guidelines necessary to clarify issues around implementation of the state LRE policy.

Consolidated Recommendations

23. The SDE should fully explore the new laws to permit school districts to directly bill Medicare for a wide range of related services. The SDE should provide technical assistance to districts which could programatically benefit from utilizing this financial mechanism.

24. The SDE should provide leadership in developing, through the Interdepartmental Team, an interagency statement in support of the SDE's LRE policy that is then disseminated to the field.

25. The SDE, in coordination with the Department of Health Services (DHS) and Mental Health and other appropriate public agencies, should propose language changes to state regulations that will then authorize the SDE as the final authority for determining which related services are needed for a student to benefit from special education and who is eligible to receive those related services, even when the services are provided by the other agencies.

26. The SDE should propose language to state regulations which will also address agreed upon corrective action procedures for cases when any agency fails to provide a free and appropriate education for any student, including the failure to provide necessary related services. This proposed language would be consistent with amendments to EHA-B covered in PL 99-457 related to other agency requirements for maintenance of effort in the provision of services.

27. The SDE should work through the Interdepartmental Team to develop statewide policy and guidelines which identify best practices for inte-

grated service delivery models when more than one agency is involved.

28. The SDE should provide technical assistance to the field on implementing any changes in state regulations. The SDE, in cooperation with state DHS and DMH, will develop a mechanism for joint trainings with LEAs, county level DHS, DMH and other appropriate public agencies on the implementation of any changes in the state regulations.

29. If authority cannot be achieved through changes in regulations or statute, the SDE should explore means to transfer funds to education from other agencies (DHS and DMH) so that services may be purchased and monitored directly by education agencies. Such action may also require legislative action.

30. When monitoring local plans, the SDE should ensure that language is included which addresses delivery of related services on the basis of identified student needs. Plans should address how related services will be available to any student placed in what is otherwise determined by the IEP to be the least restrictive setting. Further, the SDE will ensure that local plans include a statement within the SELPA LRE policy of how educational programs and related services will be implemented in order to accomplish the stated policy.

31. The SDE should develop specific guidelines with field input for implementing the full intent of Senate Bill 3632 related to coordinated assessment, implementation and progress review for each eligible student within required timelines and in the most facilitative educational environment.

32. The SDE should develop Requisition for Purchase (RFPs) for developing and/or evaluating service delivery models in each related service area in order to recommend best practices to the field. Emphasis should be placed on expeditious and creative use of resources. The SDE should, in cooperation with other agencies, be prepared to waive specific current practices in order to allow the grantee with the flexibility to pilot innovative approaches.

33. The SDE should develop a program advisory identifying alternative models for delivery of services that include guidelines for providing consultation services, use of therapy (speech, occupational therapy/physical therapy), aides and other innovative strategies. The models would include consideration of factors associated with the delivery of services in highly, as well as sparsely, populated areas.

34. The SDE should work with the Department of Health Services in order

to allow therapists' caseloads to be defined to include: 1) ongoing consultation to educational staff and students' families, and 2) maintenance of skills, no matter how limited.

35. The SDE should work with the State Allocation Board to develop a portable therapy unit designed to meet DHS and DMH requirements. The SDE will draft necessary legislation to authorize the State Allocation Board to lease these specialized portable classroom units to eligible LEAs. The SDE will examine possibilities for utilizing fully equipped mobile units for delivery of needed related services for low incidence populations. Included in this examination will be a study of what is included as necessary specialized equipment and space for providing related services.

36. The SDE should encourage staff development plans providing joint trainings of related service personnel including education, DHS or DMH and other appropriate public agencies which develop transdisciplinary models for delivery of services in a variety of settings.

37. The SDE, in collaboration with other agencies, should develop and/or identify existing training modules to be used with targeted audiences to include parents, general and special educators, aides other agency personnel, business community representatives, and the IHE personnel.

38. The SDE, with field involvement, should develop a media presentation (LRE in Action) focusing on the provision of support services in least restrictive settings; develop a training module describing strategies for providing related services in an integrated setting and across demographic conditions; develop a training module depicting effective consultation models for educators and related service personnel; develop a training module which provides an overview of technology and terminology generally needed by educators and other related services personnel in a transdisciplinary model; and develop a training module highlighting specialized training for instructional aides, therapy aides and other classified staff.

D. Low Incidence Population Issues

Reports concerning the integration of students who are visually impaired, hard of hearing or deaf were completed by the Task Force. Each of these reports provides a long listing of major barriers which interfere with the successful integration of these students. Both reports drew a relationship between services and

resources which must be available to both improve the quality of a student's program as well as his or her successful integration. Therefore, many of the recommendations from those subcommittees dealt with improvements necessary to general program quality. Both reports stressed the need for the SDE to assume increased leadership in the following areas:

a. Further development and/or implementation of program guidelines in each low incidence area. These guidelines must include provisions for en suring quality services in integrated settings.

b. Improvement in the effectiveness of SDE consultant services in these low incidence areas.

c. Active support by the SDE to ensure that the physical environment of schools being constructed and/or modified accommodate the educational, social and safety needs of each integrated student.

d. Better the SDE organization and dissemination of resources pertaining to equipment, books, materials, technologies, related services and expert personnel in these low incidence areas. These resources will be necessary both to meet the unique educational needs of the student as well as provide equal access to the activities of the regular education classroom.

e. Ensurance that persons with expertise in these low incidence areas be readily available to programs that integrate students as it relates to the area of assessment, staff supervision and program development, implementation and evaluation. Funding models which support standards to maintain adequate caseloads and class sizes must be explored.

f. Leadership to school districts such that the social and emotional needs of students in integrated placements are more aggressively appreciated, planned for and met.

In addition to the need areas listed above, the subcommittee shared the concerns addressed by other subcommittees, to restructure both the finance model and the personnel preparation model in order to accommodate many of these recommendations. Many of these concerns have been addressed more specifically in other sections of this report as well as the specific subcommittee reports. It should

be noted that the subcommittee on integrating students who are deaf and hard of hearing addressed particular concerns about the charge of the Task Force in its subcommittee report. Specifically, the subcommittee was reluctant to focus on integration barriers without stressing its opinion that the paramount issue facing the education of these students is the provision of an appropriate quality education, more so than identifying barriers to least restrictive environment placement issues. On the other hand, the subcommittee dealing with issues pertaining to visually handicapped programs report that this population has a long history of integrating an overwhelming percentage of this population. As a result, a large number of knowledgeable and committed professionals and consumers exist within the visually handicapped program community that the SDE can draw upon. It is assumed that SDE will review these unedited subcommittee reports and take the necessary actions to address these major concerns. The recommendations contained in the body of this full report are intended to summarize the recommendations made in each of the two subcommittee reports which focus on increasing and enhancing integrated placement.

39. **It is recommended that the SDE take a more active role in providing leadership and support for both visually impaired and deaf and hard of hearing programs that place students in integrated settings. The *CSDE Program Guidelines for Visually Impaired Individuals* need to be more aggressively implemented and disseminated. Guidelines for integrated placements of students who are deaf and hearing impaired must be developed.**

40. **It is recommended that the SDE ensure that programs throughout the State of California have access to consultants who have specific knowledge of needs, services and resources available in the particular low incidence area. The SDE should ensure that other consultants have an effective and efficient means of accessing such expertise. The SDE should examine ways to reorganize and/or retrain their consultant staff to accomplish this recommendation.**

41. **It is recommended that the SDE ensure further development and im-**

plementation of guidelines in these low incidence areas to ensure that the physical environment of the school be modified and equipped to facilitate the education, communication, and safety needs of each student. Recommendations for modifications must also be submitted by the SDE to the State Allocations Board via the Special Education Facilities Committee. Examples of such modifications include, but are not limited to, alarm lights, television/movie decoders, Telecommunication Device for the Deaf (TDD's), paging equipment, FM hearing devices, acoustical design to insure maximum sound amplification, forced ventilation, carpeting, lighting efficiency and space for related staff and equipment to be housed.

42. It is recommended that the SDE further develop and/or implement guidelines which ensure that supervisors, related service staff, instructors, parents and others have training, knowledge and sensitivity to perform their respective roles in assessment, implementation and evaluation of each low incidence program in general and each student's IEP in particular. All providers must have access to persons with specific qualifications in the low incidence area of concerns as well as the professional discipline of concern (e.g., a school psychologist with deaf competencies).

43. It is recommended that the SDE review the subcommittees' recommendations of ways in which to better attract, prepare, support and retain qualified educational interpreters, orientation and mobility instructors, transcribers, media specialists, credentialled teachers in each of these low incidence areas, and other qualified related service staff. Guidelines should be further refined and/or developed which clearly define the role(s) of each related service staff as well as qualification and skill levels.

44. It is recommended that the SDE explore ways to facilitate the organization and coordination of resources, expertise, and other support services in a regionalized manner. Such a system should create a more effective and efficient means of both accessing particular kinds of expertise as needed and meeting the unique needs of sparsely populated areas.

45. It is recommended that the SDE further develop and implement guidelines which ensure that class size and caseloads are specified in such a way as to increase both the quality of each student's instructional program and the likelihood that his or her integration will be supported, accepted and successful. SDE should work in order to ensure that funding mechanisms to support these caseloads and class sizes are developed.

46. **It is recommended that the SDE promote further development and implementation of guidelines to ensure that the needs of students for peer interaction, role models and extracurricular activities are appreciated, identified and supported. The SDE should aggressively develop mechanisms for funding transportation in order to provide extensive support for extracurricular activities.**

47. **It is recommended that the SDE assume greater leadership and support for making books, state-of-the-art equipment, materials, adaptations and other technologies financially and physically available to districts who need them. Educational consultants must be in a position to assist in the identification, acquisition and distribution of such resources.**

48. **It is recommended that the SDE develop a comprehensive system to ensure an aggressive preservice, inservice, and parent training program. Activities must be based on the state-of-the-art of best practices, and be provided in formats which are appropriate to various audiences and geographic areas.**

49. **It is recommended that the SDE fund demonstration and research projects which identify and improve the current status of related services in low incidence areas across the state (e.g., educational interpreting, braille transcription).**

50. **The SDE should review, develop and use, as appropriate, resources such as the Clearinghouse Depository for Handicapped Students and the National Task Force on Education Interpreting Publication from National Training Institute for the Deaf, the California Transcribers and Educators of the Visually Handicapped. The subcommittee report dealing with issues pertaining to Visually Handicapped Programs contained a listing of LEAs with experience in overcoming issues related to each identified barrier area. The SDE should draw upon such expertise and experience. The subcommittees included members from associations and agencies that are specifically concerned with the welfare of these low incidence populations. The SDE should continue to solicit their expertise and involvement.**

E. Teacher Credentialing Issues

The successful integration of students into the regular education environment and program depends largely upon the availability, attitudes and compe-

tence of credentialed teachers. Further implementation of LRE policy will result in certain changes in ways in which instruction is imparted to students with disabilities in California schools. Commensurate with these service delivery changes are corresponding changes in the ways that teachers are prepared, certified and inserviced. The task force convened a subcommittee to begin examining these training issues. However, this subcommittee did not have the time to fully study the full range of training issues and options, formulate detailed recommendations, gain adequate field input, and submit a report. The subcommittee proposed some recommendations regarding changes in the credentialing structure via letters and phone correspondence. These preliminary recommendations were the subject of debate within the Task Force and certainly require further study.

Recommendation

51. It is recommended that the SDE seek a task force to include representation from both general and special education, higher education, the Commission on Teacher Credentialing and the Chancellor's Office of the California State University system. That task force would have the responsibility to study and recommend changes in the teacher credentialing system, and if necessary, propose needed legislative changes.

Rationale for Recommendation

Based on preliminary work conducted by the subcommittee on teacher licensing, attention should be drawn to the need for not only addressing new "LRE-related" competencies that have implications for teacher training programs, but also the teacher shortage in special education that currently exists and is expected to increase throughout the state. At the same time, other subcommittee reports stressed the need for some personnel to develop some very specific and highly technical competencies, especially in low incidence areas. The recommendation for

the formulation of a teacher licensing task force includes the suggestion to consider the study of the following issues and the viability of the following options:

a. Ways in which the preparation for a career in education can begin earlier in the college experience than currently available. In order to accomplish this the advantages and disadvantages of creating an education minor at the undergraduate level should be explored. The coursework associated with this minor should allow for introductory and basic methodology special education courses to become a part of the general multiple subjects coursework.

b. Requirements and options for current and additional practica should provide experiences for future teachers in integrated educational environments and programs.

c. A thorough review of all of the competencies related to each specialist credential area. Attention must be directed to both the consultative roles a specialist plays in an integrated setting and to the highly specialized direct service roles required by different special education populations. It is assumed that if some of the basic special education coursework were completed in the undergraduate program then more advanced training and experiences could be included in these specialist programs. As the task force examines those issues the possibility of a new organization of credential programs might need to be considered. Therefore, the task force would need to consider and propose changes in current legislation.

d. The task force should direct special attention to the rapid pace at which changes are occurring in the state-of-the-art of both general and special education. These changes have direct implications for training needs of teachers after receiving their credential(s). One controversial suggestion from the subcommittee was for the specialist credentials to be time-limited. In any event, the task force and Department should state ways in which credentialing programs, masters programs and inservice programs might meet the needs for teachers to update their skills.

Closing Remarks

In sum, the chairs of the LRE Task Force wish to thank all the participants who served on the Task Force and on each subcommittee, and who completed the many surveys and interviews. In addition, many agencies and organizations throughout the state are to be commended for their willingness to support this Task Force by providing representatives and providing critical feedback to the SDE, the Task Force and each subcommittee. Finally we wish to thank Assistant Superintendent Campbell for the support, commitment and discretion he directed toward this Task Force. We believe the Task Force has fulfilled its role as an advisory to the State Department of Education. While a great deal of interest, planning and activity has occurred related to integrating students with disabilities, many significant challenges remain.

We personally look forward to a time when integration is not perceived by anyone as a trade-off for other needed services or a reduced quality of services provided. Rather, we look forward to a time when the integration of a student into his/her home, school and community is perceived as a program goal, as a measured program outcome and as an indicator of a quality education.